MTO 23.2 Examples: Spicer, Fragile, Emergent, and Absent Tonics in Pop and Rock Songs

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)
http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.2/mto.17.23.2.spicer.php
Example 1. Daryl Hall and John Oates, “She’s Gone” (1973)
Example 2. The Four Tops, “Reach Out I’ll Be There” (1966)
Example 3. Elton John, "Someone Saved My Life Tonight" (1975)

CHORUS

C\#6
A\#7
D\#

VERSE

G\#6
A\#7
E\#5m

I guess I should have known by the way you packed your cat sideways

that it wouldn't last

(etc.)
Example 5. Possible harmonic-functional interpretations of some oscillating two-chord vamps

Example 6. Two songs built on a shuttle of two major chords with roots lying a whole step apart

a) Jane’s Addiction, “Jane Says” (1988)

b) The [Detroit] Spinners, “I’ll Be Around” (1972)
Example 7. The Human League, “Human” (1986), main progression (the “Sisyphus effect”)

```plaintext
I  I  I  I

IV7  IV7  IV7  IV7

D♭M9  E♭  Fm7  E♭/G  A♭  DB♭M9
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Example 8. Two songs with potentially viable Lydian openings

a) Fleetwood Mac, “Sara” (1977)

b) R.E.M., “Man on the Moon” (1992)
Example 9. Two songs by the Psychedelic Furs
b) "Love My Way" (1982)

INTRO (and VERSE)

CHORUS

Love my way,
it's a new—road.
Example 10. Three recent #1 hits built on a repeating four-bar groove